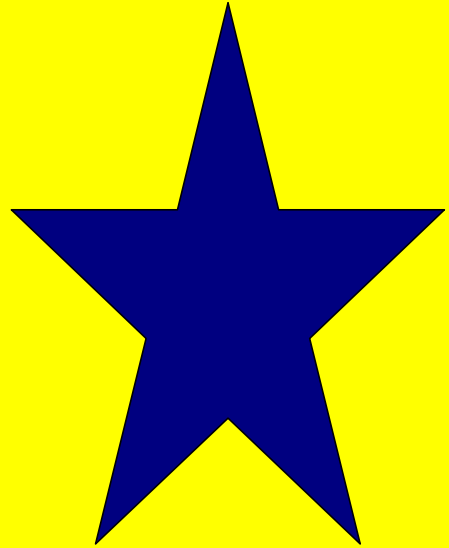


Doña Julia



And Other Selected Poems by

ALBERTO O. CAPPAS

Published by 1st Books Library - 2002

**This book is dedicated to the journey of the human spirit.
It's amazing how a small island, occupied by foreign invaders,
And so many obstacles in their way,
Can survive and populate the world with so many successful
Puertorriqueños.**

Puerto Ricans come from the roots of a powerful spirit.

Doña Julia

And Other Selected Poems

By

Alberto O. Capps

Doña Julia and Other Selected Poems by Alberto O. Capps
© 2002 by 1st Books Library

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED
Manufactured in the United States of America
ISBN: 1-4033-0737-7

Acknowledgments

Many of the poems published in this collection
First appeared in the following publications:

El Boricua National Magazine
Black Images Journal
Forty Acres & a Mule Anthology
The Rican Journal
Latin NY Magazine
Revista Chicana-Riqueña Anthology
Buffalo Sunday News
Syracuse Impartial Citizen News
Buffalo Latin Journal
WNET-TV Arts Series
Guild Press
Bearers of Blackness Anthology
Black Men Still Singing Anthology
Full Circle Anthologies
Murmurs of the Past Anthology
On Being Black, Volume II
Primal Voices Journal
Echolalia, Verse & Vibrations
The UB Spectrum
El Diario-La Prensa
Saludos Hispano Magazine
Disintegration of the Puerto Ricans

Special Acknowledgment

Special acknowledgment to my wife

Mayra

To my two daughters

Arlene and Joanne

And to my grandkids who keep me alive to show them the history:

Matthew, Santi, Simone

And last but not least

Special acknowledgment to my family tribe of brothers and sisters:

Norma, Sain, Candy, Brunie, Mary, Louis, Frances

A beautiful product created by **Quiñonez, Capps and Cosme**

Introduction

Many of the poems in this collection have been published in several collections and anthologies.
With your support, they will continue to be around for a new generation.
You will also find several poems published here for the first time.
Your comments and feedback are welcomed!

About The Book
Doña Julia & Other Selected Poems by Alberto O. Capps

by Jaira Placide -- New York University

Clear. Natural. Poignant. These words accurately describe Alberto O. Capps' work. Capps understands the suffering and struggles of Puerto Ricans living in Mainland America as well as in Puerto Rico. His poetry traces their hopes, problems, and misconceptions from the island to the mainland where they discover dreams do die hard. In the poem "Suicide of a Puerto Rican Jibaro," one need not be Puerto Rican to identify with the alienation faced when entering a cold, foreign, and jungle-like world. Capps successfully explores what such a drastic change can mean for a Puerto Rican away from his island, where he is the majority. In "...Jibaro," for the Puerto Rican man who emigrates to the United States, "A million times his body was raped by the unfriendly cold... to pursue the American Dream..." Capps is a relentless observer and commentator of what happens when a people leave their homeland, or forget where they come from, to pursue the uncertainties of the American Dream. His poetry, ironic at times, questions whether this dream does exist. In "A Spoken Secret," "Light skin Puerto Ricans forget to speak Spanish... and dark skin Puerto Ricans adopt hot combs to straighten their hair." In "Doña Julia," a woman is trapped like a mouse in America and so commits suicide as a last attempt to return to her homeland. And in "Maria," a young girl sits patiently thinking about her experiences in New York since leaving Puerto Rico and now waits "for the overdose (of a drug) to take effect." Of course this is not to say that all Puerto Ricans who emigrate to the United States end up killing themselves but it does show that Capps is keenly aware of a sort of cultural and spiritual death that happens to Puerto Ricans when they leave the tropical scenes and adopt certain American values. In the ironic humorous poem, "Her Boricua," a woman buys the Moon, tax-free, and invites her relatives and friends on weekend nights to "admire the beauty of her new possession." She tells them that in America, "you have the freedom to buy anything you want." "Haiti in Puerto Rico" explores the death theme even further. "I recited useless words of a poem to an audience of Puerto Ricans, turned into zombies, refusing to break the spell of all the misfortunes." **Doña Julia** is a poetry book filled with poetic stories, forceful and powerful imagery and messages that will stimulate all minds that come into contact with it. Capps' language is original and refreshing, which makes his writing very natural and uncluttered with abstractions. Capps is correct, knows what he needs to say and clearly makes his point.

A Spoken Secret

Afro hair

Kinky hair

Straight hair

Mingling into emerging formation of

“Grito de Lares”

While manifest destiny made plans to colonialize tropical minds

Turning Puerto Ricans into reflections of color values

Where to advance the race became a spoken secret

Light skin Puerto Ricans forgot to speak

Spanish and now eat rice and beans with American gravy

Dark skin Puerto Ricans adopted hot combs to straighten out their hair

Today

A Puerto Rican reality

Inflicted with a progression

Of colonial confusion and paranoia.

¡Basta Ya La Ignorancia!

(Enough of the Ignorance!)

Outsiders with intelligent eyes see a special people
They see that size don't calculate
From here to Hawaii and Florida to Chicago
Contributors to arts and science
Contributors to music and Hollywood
Composed of poets and writers
And natural beauty capturing pageants
Outsiders with intelligent eyes see a special people
We have a need to lower the barrier to elevate the standards
A need to avoid the rhetoric
A need to avoid the enemy within
Perpetuating the illusion
There are beautiful mountains in the island
Superior beings have carved some clues that
Insiders can't see.
From Jimmy's Bronx Café to Latin Quarters and Poet's Café
From East Harlem to the South Bronx and Lower East Side
From Brooklyn and Queens
Politicians continue to sell us bags of no goods.

To My Father I

(Dedicated to Norma, Sain, Candy, & Brunie)

I loved you like a son is supposed to love his father
A fixture
Until the spirit leaves the body
What could've been has passed
The person I became in your absence
The person I became in my mother's presence
The relationship between your sons and daughters
Encounters carried on my shoulders
Confronted by the environment
Learning to be abused and then becoming the abuser
Could've used some directions from your manhood
In your absence I created a cushion to handle the falls
Becoming a master at navigating the hurt and pain
I was the lucky one
Able to see the invisible wounds mounting
And I was able to heal
Overcoming the penetration
Your daughters had no clues
They continued to search for answers
That I found in your absence
They needed their father
As much as we needed our mother
Who stayed and struggled to
Overcome the bitter reality of an unfriendly city
To protect the part of the treaty you deserted
Your returned journey to your birthplace
An island looking to maintain
A relationship with the mainland or to be on her own
Did you remember that our mother did not speak the word of the mainland?
I loved you like a son is supposed to love his father
A fixture
Until the spirit leaves the body
What could've been has passed
I loved you like a son is supposed to love his father.

Her Borinquen

Doña Rivera

The one everybody comes to when
They run into unresolved situations
Was sold the Moon yesterday.
She was very happy 'cause the
Salesman gave her a break,
Telling her she did not have to pay taxes on it.
“It was tax free,”
He told her.
All her neighbors were surprised
That she accomplished such a big thing.
So they assembled and celebrated
Her new fortune
They decided that Doña should
Keep it a secret or else the welfare department
Would come and take the Moon away from her.
Time passed and Doña Rivera
Became a very proud woman.
At night, especially when the
Moon was bright and in full view
Doña Rivera would stay up late
And admire the beauty of her new possession.
On weekend nights,
She would invite her relatives and best friends
Over to share the experience with them
“See”
She would tell her friends and relatives
“In this country
You have the freedom to buy
Anything you want”

DOÑA JULIA

Doña Julia

Committed suicide last night
Cause the welfare department
Demanded too many documents she did not
Know existed

The utilities were removed
The landlord proudly gave her eviction
Papers

The friendly bodega accused her
Of trespassing

Holding on to hope
Doña Julia visited Puerto Rican leaders
With fancy titles

Promising her things that never arrived
Doña Julia

Always made it a point to vote
With the democrats, the party of
The poor, she used to say

Doña Julia
Committed suicide last night cause life was angry with her
She told her spirits

And the people that didn't
Know her always found things to say about her
With fancy titles

Her daughter Evelyn disappeared with this
Dude named Hector who promised her every thing he didn't have
And her son Josèlito

Who dropped out of school at the age of 10
Always took money from Doña Julia to pay
His expenses and other things for the dead head
He too disappeared looking for his friends who were never around
When he didn't have anything

Doña Julia
Committed suicide cause life was angry with her
Her dead face had a smile that police officers did not understand
Someone that did not know how to read found a note
And flushed it down the toilet thinking it had something

To do with the numbers
The note said something about
"One way or the other,
I'm going back to Puerto Rico."

**Suicide of a Puerto Rican Jibaro
(In Mainland Buffalo)**

They didn't understand
They were all Americans now
He would smile sometimes
Thinking about his youth in Ponce
Carmen, Rosa, Teresa & Liza
Holding on to dreams
That helped him stay alive
The tropical music that was killed
By the new sound of "salsa"
But they didn't understand
His children didn't understand.
A million times his body was raped
By the unfriendly cold
The farm he sacrificed
To pursue the American Dream
Trying to buy some dignity in the trade
Of the unemployment office
Shoveling the snow that invaded
His tropical existence
He would walk up Virginia Street
And down Hudson Street
Searching
For some clues of understanding,
But
Only
Found
New inventions of nightmares
That wanted to destroy his dreams
The dead dreams
That helped him stay alive
Were too weak
For the American nightmare
They didn't understand
They were
All Americans now

Socorro

Reflections
Morning Sun hiding from the clouds
Another week
Time to begin again and again
Desayuno
Ironing and other tasks
Taking the kids to school
Tired and weak
Declaring war against her existence
Thinking of Carlos
La Plaza
Charles Evans Hughes
High Bridge
Coney Island
Las Villas
The first trip away from the city
She woke Angelica and Jessica
Fighting to stay inside the warm blanket
Coffee pot boiling
She walked into the room
Crying inside
Feelings were betrayed
The man that made love to her last night
The man that gave her two beautiful daughters
The man that she married
The man that loved her gone away
Opening his eyes with a smile
And she returned the smile
Get up honey
It's about that time
Your things are ready
There's hot coffee on the stove
You will be late for work.

Milagros, A Love Story

When she was born
her mother named her Milagros
Her father was never around
The neighbors said she was beautiful
but it was sad that her hair was a little kinky
When she was fifteen years old
she had dreams to go after
When she was seventeen
she dropped out of school
'cause it was the groovy thing to do
When she was almost eighteen
she opened her legs to Papo (who told her he loved her)
The night after, he told her to get the hell away
When she was almost eighteen
she was cool, she partied, she smoked
and got down a few times
hoping someone would tell her
'I love you' (and mean it)
But time passed (and no one ever did)
When she was nineteen
she had five abortions.
When she was nineteen
she was cool, she was beautiful
selling her wasted body on 42nd Street
to buy American Dreams
hating the ugly smell of polluted breath
and old men telling her
'I love you, you Spanish girl.'

Love

One
More
Time
My
Heart
Remembered
That it is
Human.
Thanks
To
Your
Contradictions
I'm sitting
Here
Trying
To stop
The
Hurricane
Flowing
Through
My body
Trying
To stop
The
Storm
From
Ripping
My
Heart.

Maria' Journey

She was sitting there
The lonely traffic passing by
Thinking of yesterday when Mommy
Used to cry in protest
The warm air freezing her body
Listening to broken down voices of edited confusion
Subway rides traveling to nowhere
The wino on the corner learning to read
The New York Times
The polluted smell of everything hanging around her body
Thinking of yesterday when Fernando told her
"If you love me - you have to prove it"
She was sitting there
Hating the endless hours of the night
Those that passed looked at her with inviting eyes
That wanted to come out after her
Black and Puerto Rican kids playing Cowboys and Indians
After dark in the backyard streets
Where all of them
The Rats, the Dogs, the Cats, and the Pushers
Hold their daily meetings
She was sitting there
Hating herself for accepting a defeat that loved her
The lonely traffic passing by
Bars and liquor stores on every corner conditioning the younger victims
While drug dealers count their money of death
Thinking of yesterday
Her trip from the island and her first introduction
To the New York cold that ravaged her body
Sitting there
Thinking of yesterday when Freddie played her wrong
Accusing her of being a puta for no reason at all
He is now happily married to a girl
From Queens who makes love to the Dog next door
Thinking of yesterday
The dances, the parties, and the James Bond movies
She loved so much
And now
Waiting for the overdose
Of everything to take effect.

Haiti in Puerto Rico

Yesterday el ay bendito
Was kidnapped
By dark clouds of angry
Miseries....
Yesterday
I recited useless words
Of a useless poem to
An audience
Of Puerto Ricans
Turned into zombies
Refusing to break the spell
Of all the conditioning misfortunes
And like helpless souls
They continue to cover the reality
Of their echolalia existence
As if covering black coffee
With heavy cream and sugar
In Haiti
They say
The Zombies work the field
In Puerto Rico
The Zombies are transported to the Mainland.

Aguacate Power

Unconscious Puerto Ricans have it made in the USA
They exist without the ganas
Without a place in the Sun
They sing songs for politicians
With nothing to offer them in return for their dedication
Unconscious Puerto Ricans have it made in the USA
They exist without the ganas
Without a space in the city
They sing songs politicians
With nothing to offer them in return for their dedication
Unconscious Puerto Ricans have it made in USA
They do not know the harm they generate.

The Ruse -- One

Take your tropical self
Into the avenues
Of Arbor Hill
And observe
The disappointed bodies
Mourning
Those who went
Stonewalls and Rockefeller
Signs of things kept secret
You sing
In the cold winter
And all the politicians
Will buy a ticket
To your annual fund-raiser
Be polite
Do not wear polyester suites
Stay away from Cuchifritos
Drink martinis
And speak English
Without broken-down clues

The Ruse -- Two

Take your tropical self
Into the streets
Of Arbor Hill
And observe
The disappointed bodies
Mourning
Those who went
Stonewalls and Rockefeller
Signs of things kept secret
Be polite
Do not wear polyester suites
Stay away from Cuchifritos
Drink martinis
Speak English
Without broken-down clues
And make sure you have a godfather
Dancing by your side
You sing
In the cold winter
And all the politicians
Will buy a ticket
To your annual fund-raiser.

Waiting for an Upgrade

Capitol of Albany
Over three hundred years old
Still vital and strong
Refusing to die or fade away
Into the history books
The Puerto Ricans
Those that come and go
Those that came and went
Depending on how the Wind was blowing
And depending on how fast they were
Blown away
In the capital of Albany
The Puerto Ricans talk politics
Groping for a space to declare
Their home
The same dream that gave endurance
To the Germans, the Jews, the Irish
The Italians, the African Americans
The Catholics, and the Protestants
In the capital of Albany
Where kingmakers and their politicians
Talk about appointments to make
Appointments to approve
Appointments to reject
Appointments to consider
In the capital of Albany
For the rainbow faces
There is disappointment.

Gentrification

Pepe looked across the street
And noticed something good
Happening in the neighborhood
“Look across the street”
He screamed out to Carmen
“The building is being fixed-up
Maybe now they will fix-up
The whole neighborhood”
“¡Que chevere!” said Carmen to Pepe
It was the beginning of something
Named gentrification
Moving in next door to all the next doors
Of the neighborhood
Leaving no trace of its obvious presence
Pepe and Carmen
Are now
Very unhappily residing
Somewhere
Not in Loisaida.

Changes

For

The good of the
Children and youth
Of the future,

Make sure that when
We

Plant

The seeds of change

Seeds of discourse

Seeds of values

Seeds of standards

Seeds of morality

Seeds of philosophy

It

Will not be

A reproduction

Of a play

Being

Performed

On a different stage.

For Miguel Piñero

He entered
Into an
Isolated abyss
Of
Ancestral relevance
With mystical eyes
Covered with
A
Scarlet stupidity
Searching for
A meaning to his presence
That
Created a sense of
Confusion to his essence,
And died waiting for echoes of
Approval that
Faded
Away with the
Congregation.

Stickball

Summer screams
Where half-naked bodies dance
In the shadow of despair
Where streets become playgrounds
And fire hydrants become beaches
And rooftops
A place to get closer to the Sun
Summer screams
Where half-naked bodies dance
In the shadow of despair
Watching Joselito playing
Cowboys and Indians
Eddie in the corner
Talking about the
Viceroys against the Sinners
Angel and Junior
Creating a baseball field in the backyard
Bobby, the Junkie, committed a robbery
A solution to his problem
Carmen with Pete
Under the stairs
Losing innocence
And Juan
Playing stickball in the middle of the street
Killed by a foreign driver who didn't understand
Recreation on this side of town.

A Distant Despair

The building
With the graffiti
“¡Viva Puerto Rico Libre!”
And other declarations
Woman and her three children
Are evicted for not paying the rent
Down the block kids play army games
Moving on to strategic backyard war attacks
Mrs. Garcia glued to the window
Looking from corner to corner
For stories to talk about and to invent
Little Jose sleeping in the room
Next to the window facing another
Window of the adjacent building
Caught a roach preparing to enter his right ear
Willie hates cold water but takes cold baths under useless protest
Tia Juanita
Recuperating from a ghetto breakdown
Came home from the Hospital
New ancient ceiling came down
And opened up her newly designed head
Coming from Long Island
Doing 90 with 69 Volkswagen
The Landlord intends to collect his rent.

Once Upon a Time

Once upon a time

Black and Puerto Rican students

Talked about revolution

With sociology minds and pencils in their hands

Tools given to them by the system

Once upon a time

Professor Rodriguez and other educators

Gave lectures on the importance of Puerto Rican liberation

Many of them waiting to be published in the

New York Times and Washington post

It a nightmare

A cover-up

Composed of Anti-poverty Liberation programs

Producing intellectual morons

Conditioned into consumers.

Mother's Day

Happy Mother's Day

The Junkie said to the Wino on the corner

The Wino smiled back and said:

What's so happy about Mother's Day?

The Junkie said he was happy

'Cause his mother died years ago

And she does not have to see him

The way he is today

She would not be happy today

He said

The Wino said:

My mother is alive today

And she is very happy

Today she made over two hundred dollars

And gave me a twenty-dollar bill

And a bottle of Twister

I wished her a happy mothers day

The Junkie said:

Man, that's cool

Why don't you let me have a dime

And I'll pay you back next week

And the Wino said:

You crazy! For you there is

No such thing as next week

Do you take me for a fool?

The Junkie looked around and saw no one

So he took out his reliable knife

And pushed it through the Wino's heart

Taking the twenty dollars the Twister

And told the dying Wino:

Now you'll be history

And your prostitute mother

Will not have to see you like this

And she will not have to share

Her hard-earned cash with a Bum like you

Happy Mother's Day, you faggot

The Junkie said.

Disintegration

It's no secret anymore.
Sooner or later
It happens
You begin to note the pain
Effects you did not care about before
The salsa love songs
Composed especially for us
For the situation
And the phone calls
So many
But not the one from you
The anguish does not go away
Abandoned feelings
The reasoning pattern is gone
No more concentration
You can't forget
You would like to disremember
Only if one could go back
Do it differently
Withdraw what was said
At Club Broadway
It was the Cuba Libre
Setting in
Desperation
Loneliness
Existence of attachment
Someone very distinct
A fantasy comes true
We allowed the insecurities
To close in
Not sure of one's totality
The cultural debate
Que tu eres Americana
An entanglement
La sangre puertorriqueña
It may be the best-kept secret but after you
The field has one less confused Puerto Rican player.

Management Reorganization (Bilingual education)

Preliminary process

To be analyzed

Taking the management plan

Into consideration

Outlining policy concerns

That's the whole process

Modification regarding the

Design of the re-organization plan

Functional programming

To be implemented

Based on need

Improved management of major

Agency functions and service

Communications at ease

Re-classification system a major

Priority in the new structure

Central support unit attached to your

Brain control remote system

This is classified

As Management Confidential

Considering accountability

To ease the pain in view of the new change

Elimination of space & staff

The addition of forced location

Major initiatives to monitor

Audits of concerns & behavior

New political appointees

Will need orientation and training

To continue

This latrine operation.

Civil Service is a major barrier.

Bochinche

Non
Poets
Get
Caught
Up
In
The
Mystical
Winds,
Congregating
In
The
Polluted
Discussions
Of
Opinions
Only
To
Find
Self
Discovery
In
A
Suicide
Note
Craved in shame.

Letter for Iris

It was long ago yesterday
The oldies, the gangs, the wine
Trying to find definitions to everything
Everyone refusing to speak Spanish
Stupid heavy accents
Keeping our welfare secrets to ourselves
You didn't reveal anything until years later
It was long ago yesterday
The oldies, the gangs, the wine
Going to sets during school hours
And drinking that terrible wine that you disliked so much
And the Ricans and Dominicans from downtown
Rapping to you behind my back
The Latin Knights against the Young Lovers
The Sinners against the Viceroy
The Dragons against the Assassins
Jitterbugging into oblivion
Willie, a junkie on Columbus Avenue
Eddie, a homo on 72nd Street
Carlos, a revolutionary at Attica
Sara, a community leader in Washington Heights
Jose, a capitalist on Wall Street
Mimi, a housewife in Puerto Rico
Carmen, a puta in the South Bronx
And Miguel
Demonstrating in front of the United Nations
Fifty buttons on his jacket
It was long ago yesterday
The oldies, the gangs, the wine
Remembering those wonderful nightmares
The playground, the backyard, the roof
The fire hydrant, the basement
And those silent trips to the park where we called
For the plans that never came
I leave you know
The oldies, the gangs, the wine
Hoping you found your definitions without regrets
I discovered a new level of ignorance and stupidity
Natives refusing to open the path to the future.

Oblivious

When they were kids
They used to play like kids
When they understood
Their emotional feelings
They embraced and shared their emotional feelings
When they understood
The meaning of love
They understood when they felt the love
When they understood
The meaning of life
They struggled to survive in life
When they understood
The meaning of hate
They forgot the meaning of love
When they understood
The meaning of the present
They forgot the meaning
Of their past.

Growing Up

Staring

At the window from within

Trying to uncover the yesterday of faraway

Smelling the aroma of the winter cold wind

Knocking against the window

Waiting for the friendly snow to arrive

Waiting for our mother to proclaim

That school will be canceled

And we will go out and play

Set to construct the snowman

The booths were ready

Yesterday is faraway

Smelling the odor of the now polluted wind

Sticking on to the window

Waiting for the unfriendly snow

Predicted to appear soon

Work will not be canceled

We will go out and labor

No proclamation from our mothers.

¡Ganas!

Puerto Ricans con ganas

Will save the island from her confusion

Puerto Ricans con ganas

Will give Puerto Rico her independence

Puerto Ricans con ganas

Will take Puerto Ricans into the next century

Puerto Ricans con ganas

Will make sure that their history and culture will not be forgotten

Puerto Ricans con ganas

Understand the importance of Puerto Rican economic and business development

Puerto Ricans con ganas

Always make sure that they first put their money into their children's education

Puerto Ricans con ganas

Always make sure that their Puerto Rican children and youth

Value the importance of education

Puerto Ricans con ganas

Always make it their business to reach out to other Puerto Ricans

Lacking the ganas' substantial ingredient

Puerto Ricans con ganas

Understand that negativism is very destructive to their growth and development

Puerto Ricans con ganas

Support and purchase goods from Puerto Rican businesses

Puerto Ricans con ganas

Keep their eyes on their Puerto Rican elected officials

Making sure their community is receiving the promised services and goods

Puerto Ricans con ganas

Understand the value of hard work and sacrifice

Puerto Ricans con ganas

Understand that the majority of Puerto Ricans are always

Striving and intent to better their lives

Puerto Ricans con ganas

Understand the difference between

Puerto Ricans in the United States and

Puerto Ricans in Puerto Rico

Puerto Ricans con ganas

Understand the meaning of Viva Puerto Rico Libre

Not Socialist -- not Communist

But Libre

¡Con Muchas Ganas!

BEWARE OF THOSE OF US WHO BECOME MUTANTS

The mother's womb not yet healed
From the introduction of a newborn to this world
Silenced by a bullet earmarked for a "bitch"
An extension
You, me, us, them
When will we come home?
And remove this invisible presence
Killing all of us
What will it take?
It was Brooklyn yesterday
Today, the Bronx
Tomorrow, Buffalo
Perhaps no one will be around
To experience this disappearance
Whatever happened to the voices?
Fighting the pain, fighting the forces of evil
Layers of wounds not noticed
Black and Latino damaged products
Mutants of a callous society
Killing off their future - our future
Characters judged by their actions
Where are the heroes?
The Panthers - the Lords
Fighting the external forces of echolalia
They need you now
This very moment
To fight the deterioration of the mind
Infrastructure of our survival!

Images

Morning unfolds
Urban concrete jungle
Far from tropical images for tropical people
Weekend -- leisured stretch
Engraved scars
Visible to the gringo eye
Gilbert exploring with coke
His introduction to
“Being cool”
Overdosed into wasteland
“What a story!”
Irene regretted losing her virginity
To Roberto
Introduced to AIDS
“What a story!”
Four teenagers rape young Puerto Rican woman
“What a story!”
Local politician
“Highly respected by peers”
Arrested for greed by the FBI
These and many more covered in the pages of the local gringo papers
But not this:
Margarita, Carlos, Louis
Carmensita, Ronald, Juan, José
Hilton, Donald, Evelyn
Don’t know each other
Far from each other
Same urban concrete jungle
Packing their belongings
Going places
Accepted at Yale
At Princeton
SUNY at Buffalo, Utica, NYU
Fordham, SUNY at Albany
Berkeley, Stony Brook
And other progressive deeds
This is called positive images for our children and youth.
Is there a Latino newspaper that can see this?

Final Victim

At first without clues
It came for them
And I was not moved
I did not care
I was not gay
I was not one of them
Then it decided to spread
To other territories
Invading the Junkies
Completing their self-destruction
I was not moved
I did not care
I was not a Junkie
I was not one of them
Then it decided to victimize
A few big names
From screen heroes to music idols
To sport stars
But I was not moved
I did not care
I was not a screen hero
I was not a music idol
I was not a sports star
I was not one of them
Then it came for me
It invaded
My sweetheart, with lots
Of love and compassion.
I was moved
I cared
I cared very much
I was one of them
It was too late
There was no cure
No hope
No one to advocate for my cure
There was no one left.
There was no one left.

(Poem inspired by the poem, **Victim of the Nazis**, by Pastor Niemoeller)

Eve of Knowledge

People die to make space for the new born
People are killed by ignorance to display shortcomings on the planet
Politicians are born to give birth to followers
Religion is defined to ensure compliance
Jails are constructed to prove a point
Men abuse women to show the strength in their weakness
Blacks are killed by blacks to reflect a rage produced long ago
People are fed bilingual tools to perpetuate the confusion
They bomb my island to improve their destruction capabilities
People go to mass to justify their sins
Life is designed to be user-friendly
But in 'God we Trust' compromises God's gift to the earth
The Engle continues to fly.

When he or she decides to fly

Fatherhood

A new generation

An opportunity to begin again

A community of providers carving new frontiers

Magic in the universe!

Assuming this task with a sense of love and responsibility

Serving as a positive role model

A mirror of approval and excellence

Staying away from gang rap limitations

No “niggers or bitches” here

Working to set standards for the child

So he or she may acquire the wisdom

To navigate with the eye of vision

A healthy and happy journey on this planet

Yes, yes!

As a father

One must provide working wings!

To the “Batman Man”

It's time you open your eyes
To the world and see for yourself
I know that you can hear
But refuse to listen
I know that you can feel
But refuse to touch.
I know that you can smell
But refuse to taste
You need to respond to your echoes
You need to see the colors of your shadows
It's time you open your eyes
To the world and see for yourself
You are no “Batman man”
You are a work in progress
Soon to explode
An earthly journey in your power
Into pieces that only they can direct
Unless you come to terms and let go.

Lady in Red

Your smile
haunted with painful thoughts
Darkness cannot conceal your light
Stop creating illusions that work against you
They come alive and hunt you like an animal
You are the designer of your circumstances
your space
engaging distraction
to compliment yourself
to grow
to smile
to cry
You talk about your affliction
paying homage with open arms
giving adversary keys
to your soul
You are a lady in fire
full of vast energy;
miracles are performed
by the spirit of your fate
No more
no less
You are a lady in fire
freezing yourself
in tormented thoughts
You are a lady in fire
full of vast energy
You are
the lady in red.

Thanksgiving Flight Number RM101451

In the beginning of the voyage one sealed a possibility
One took the bite
With consequences full of anticipation or
Anticipation complete with consequences
Like the appointment with karma
The student dance at the campus
You said I paid too much attention to a long lost niece
And you declared warfare on her presence
It was a specimen of the shelter to come
I saw no clues to warm you
You had none to expose
You said you loved me with verification
And I replied that I loved you with guidelines
And between the two disclosures
We uncovered a portal we were not able to uphold.
Yes my dear friend you were the reason for the rebirth
Introducing me to the city of cities
A place I used to know in my last expedition
You came to me when I was abandoning the pain
You had no clues
I had many to reveal later
And now
You in California
Me in New York
Memories with death sentences
The vibrant tone of your transported smile
Pushing me into a past that used to belong to us
That we once almost controlled
Now gone
With miles away to prove the point
I'm where you found me
Negotiating for your proxy
The relationship reminds me of Puerto Rico
And her three lovers
She continues to favor the Commonwealth
You preferred California
Why not me?
I was your true liberator
Anything that is hard to get is good to have
You left, having faith in your weakness
I stayed where you found me, with no faith in my strength
Waiting to uncover a new portal.

To My Brother MH

You were my brother
I talked to your potential connections
To let them know you were not invisible
Getting them to reconnect you
I gave you a base to protect your faith
I tried sharing with you the magic
Providing a vision for us to draw clear conclusions
But you had a hard time seeing the linkage of brotherhood
No - not the fault of your essence
But what your illusions decided to be
Afraid of the shadows
Refusing to accept the keys to your seeds
Afraid to walk the ground that gave you birth
Refusing to open your eyes to see
The darkness of the light
You were my brother
Once when you used to dare.

For TC: Father of my Nephew

Crafting letters
Poet after birth of senior years
Hidden treasures beginning to explode in words
Insights rediscovering their usage.
A late bloomer
Constructing colors in black and white
Locked in multiple secrets
Waiting to come out in poetic fashion
The poet that he was
The poet that he is
The poet that he could become
The poet that he will become
Be careful of bringing words into this delicate world
Without proper care and nourishment
Words can become silent and useless tools
Occupying useful space
When you indeed want them to become arms that can embrace
Words that can
Demand emergence
Create movement
Solicit responses
Perform magic
Dance and smile within time and space.
Crafting letters
Poet after birth of senior years
Hidden treasures beginning to explode in words
Insights rediscovering their purpose
An old young and wise poet is born in the Bronx.

To John *Bimbo* Rivas
Positively Loisaída East Village
(Dedicated to the work and vision of a pioneer)
Bimbo, Bimbo, Bimbo
La Fortaleza you talked about
No one was able to see it
'Cause no one listened to the sound
Did not see the distance of the vision
They saw only Avenue C
Full of music waves and consumers
Holding on to street corners and bodegas
Marching to oblivion and to fame
Bimbo, Bimbo, Bimbo
La Fortaleza you talked about
No one was able to see it
'Cause no one listened to the words
Only to the edited anger around the message
Only you, **Bimbo**,
Knew that Loisaída was a beginning
An operation
A whole cooperative journey
Full of life with cultural harmony and spiritual energy
Not blocks full of despair
Bimbo, Bimbo, Bimbo
La Fortaleza you talked about
No one was able to see it
Everyone missed the clues
Too many social and political agendas
On this day
New generation
Recognizes the vision, the gift
Loisaída a formula of living organs
Not a state of recollection
Not limited to an avenue
East Village, Little Italy, China Town, and West Village
Joined by
Loisaída East Village
From
FDR to Avenue B
From
Houston Street to 14th Street
Never too late
To implement the architect's vision.

MY HOME

(Dedicated to Felicia “Negri” Santana)

I have a nice home at the apartment
I have two small girls that understand innocence without definitions
I have a wife that doesn't understand my politics
I have a sister-in-law that volunteers to put her two cents behind my back
I have friends that drop in on the wrong time
And bills that visit my mailbox unexpectedly
I have a father-in-law that talks to me about buying a house
And getting involved in business while we talked about liberation
I have a clock that fights with me every morning
And a mouse that hides from me all the time
He doesn't believe me when I try to tell him that I used to live in a ghetto
I have copies of Ramparts
They had rejected my submissions many times
Perhaps I write bad poems
I do have a bad typewriter
My two small girls use it when they play house
My wife doesn't care
They use my middle-class Bar as their playhouse
During the night after midnight
I read or write
In the morning the clock wakes me
I fight against her screams for a few minutes
But she always defeats me
My wife throws away my work after my two
Small girls edited them
My sister-in-law doesn't say anything
She waits until I leave.

To My Father II

I know you must regret your decision
Now that your youth has passed
Coming closer to your mortality
Was it worth it?
You could've known them all
Deprived of the smiles and tears
The growing up
First day of school
A treasure of so many
Your pride and joy
Instead you will remain a stranger
No stories or memories to rejoice when holidays come
No footprints
How does it feel?
Is there any pain or hurt that lingers?
Is there any guilt?
Do you carry any wounds?
Can they heal?
I know you must regret your decision
Now that your youth has passed
Coming closer to your mortality
Was it worth it?

Poetry in Motion

Art

Music

Culture

A bomb falls upon society

Joy

Laughter

Tears

A bomb falls upon society

Artist

Activist

Musician

A bomb falls upon society

Ambition

Success

Failure

A bomb falls upon society

Politics

Religion

Followers

There is a choice

A poem can spread destruction or awareness

..... Racing through the city on the side of a subway car.....

**Puertoricanism
Emerging to the forefront
Of the
American Landscape
Be prepared to catch it!**



Cut and share with your children and youth, take a copy to school, to your community center, church, anywhere there are children and youth to be reached:

The Pledge

(Dedicated to our Children and Youth)

I pledge to maintain

A healthy mind and body

Staying away from the evil of drugs

I pledge always to try my best to understand

The importance of knowledge and education

Painting a positive picture of where

I plan to be tomorrow

Not allowing obstacles to stop the growth

Of my plans for the future

I pledge to seek answers to questions

Understanding that the answers to questions

Sometimes lead to other discoveries

I pledge to work hard

With the awareness and confidence

That hard work today will serve

As the seeds for my strong tree tomorrow

A tree no one will ever be able to tear down

I pledge to learn proper languages

Beginning with my mother's

Always prepared to appreciate others

I pledge to gain a better understanding

Of myself

By understanding my cultural roots

To fully accept who I am as a human being

A rainbow of many cultures and colors

I pledge to overcome any personal misfortunes

Always striving to become

A wiser person.

LA PROMESA

(Dedicado a nuestros Niños y Juventud)

Yo prometo mantener
Mente y cuerpo saludable
Alejandome del maligno vicio de las drogas
Prometo siempre esforzarme para mejor comprender
La importancia del conocimiento y la educación
Pintando un retrato positivo hacia donde
Planeo estar mañana
No permitiendo obstaculos que tronchen el desarrollo
De mis proyectos hacia el futuro.
Prometo buscar respuestas a mis preguntas,
Comprendiendo que las repuestas a preguntas
A veces nos llevan a otros descubrimientos.
Prometo trabajar con esfuerzo,
Con el conocimiento y confianza
Que el trabajo arduo hoy servirá
Como semillas para el árbol fuerte del mañana
Un árbol que jamás se podrá arrancar
Prometo aprender idiomas correctamente
Comenzando con el de mi madre
Siempre dispuesto a apreciar los de otros
Prometo lograr mejor conocimiento de mi persona
Comenzando con el conocimiento de mis raíces culturales
Aceptando quién soy como ser humano,
Un arco iris de varias culturas y colores
Prometo vencer mis desgracias personales
Transformando mis desdichas a fuerzas
Haciéndome más fuerte por las desdichas
Siempre esforzándome hacia la potencialidad
De ser una persona sabia.



The Pledge: Dedicated to our children and Youth, by Alberto O Capps, was released this past year.
This small Book is based on the poem, **The Pledge** by the same author. It's a small, 24-page pocket size,
publication. It's dedicated to children and youth, especially students enrolled in the inner city public school
system. This book is retailed at \$5.00 but we are offering a **\$2 discount** with this coupon. To get your copy,
send:

\$3.00 payable to:
Alberto O. Capps
85 4th Avenue, Suite 3JJ.
New York, New York, 10003
Attn. AOC/The Pledge

Note: We include a free bookmark with every order,
And the poem **The Pledge** is imprinted on the bookmark.



About The Author

Alberto O. Cappas is a published poet, talented writer and entrepreneur in several diverse areas. He is the author of **Echolia**, a collection of poems, published in 1989. His poetry has been included in many publications and anthologies in the United States, Canada and China. He was the recipient of the "**Keepers of Our Culture**" Award for Literature, by the New York State Hispanic Heritage Month Committee, presented on September 15, 1994. His second book of poems **Disintegration of the Puerto Ricans** was released in June of 1997. **Doña Julia & Other Selected Poems**, is Alberto's third book of poems. His talents and skills as a writer, interest in the human condition and concern for those socioeconomic issues which impact the Latino community, have served to foster in him an active interest and involvement as a journalist. This has led to his role as co-publisher and co-editor of the **Latino Village Press**, a monthly publication designed to educate and inform the Puerto Rican/Latino community about the importance of business and economic development -- "creating our own institutions and infrastructures." He is also founder and president of **Don Pedro Cookies**, the makers of Don Pedro Cookies. He is also the founder of **A Place for Poets**, a publication that featured aspiring Latino and African American artists. Further, his works have achieved wide interests, growing appeal and numerous accolades. It should be noted that his work has been featured and preserved in the City of Buffalo's new Metro subway system, with a commissioned work by the **Niagara Frontier's Transportation Authority** of an artistic "**vignette**" with two other Latino artists. The work is a thirty-foot steel tile mural, which reflects the search for a sense of belonging in this city. Also, his early works have been included in the renowned **Schomburg** Library archives. Cappas is an alumnus of the State University of New York at Buffalo and a recipient of the NYC Urban League's **Charles Evans Hughes Award for Creative Writing**. From 1982-87, he served as Deputy Commissioner of Communications and Special Projects for the New York State Division for Youth.

Alberto O. Cappas is available for poetry readings and speaking engagements
Cappas@aol.com - or - 212-353-9114

Other Collections by Alberto O. Capps

Abandoned Echoes
Disintegration of the Puerto Ricans
Echolalia, Verse & Vibrations
Milagros: A Love Story
The Pledge
Doña Julia & Other Selected Poems

Write to the poet:
Capps@aol.com

About Alberto Cappas' Poetry

An extremely heart felt and thought provoking insight. Absolutely brilliant! Bravo!
Stella Nkwanga (Starlitecafe.com website)

Congratulations! Anyone can write, but to make the reader feel and believe is a gift. Great job!
Barbara Savage (Starlitecafe.com website)

Full of depth and meaning, beautiful! Stunning work here.
Love the flow and the vision you've created. You are so gifted!
T.L. Stokes, Novato, California

Que Dios te bendigo! Your poems are slamming! I am also Puerto Rican and I've yet to tap into that side of my poet
You're making me think, hermano! Keep up the fabulous work!
Melissa Mendez, Nutley, New Jersey

Cappas is a wordsmith that paints images this side of the spiritual. Those images invoke the hope and betrayal in our
legacy to our youth.
Hugo Guzman, Washington Heights, NY

Thanks for keeping the wheels turning in my head. A playwright would find gold in your work.
Frank W. Berger, Riverdale, NY

Words are the most constructive or destructive instruments to nurture or discourage the potential in every child.
I could almost feel the force of the waterfall in your words. I can relate to the feeling - so overwhelming!
Hafeesa Nettle, Manhattan, NY

Your poems are a true ode for all parents and children, a gift of inspirational writing. Worth more than gold!
Barbara Rosen, Boca Raton, Florida

Very deep and thought provoking writer - a reality check as well.
Your talent shines through your poems.
Elaina Silva, California

I have read many of your poems. Your expressions speak volumes.
The poem, *Hide and Seek*, especially, touches my heart. Excellent writer.
Patricia Oehme, Kansas

You left your reader wanting to read more...but that is the gift of a good writer.
Sylvia Lukeman, founding member,
Poets Who Care, Liverpool, England, Great Britain

Alberto's poetry was written in a time of innocence, rebellion and change. His poems are like short stories full
of characters and situations that we can relate to.
Finally, they have no time barrier and will be read by many generations.
J. Enrique Rodriguez, Bronx, NY

Alberto encapsulates the essence of the soul. Read it, enjoy it - share it!
Angelica Aquino, Attorney / Journalist
New York City, NY

